

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of setting a validity period of an IC card, comprising:

5 preparing an IC card including a change unit whose state changes with lapse of time starting from an initial state without an external power, a measuring unit configured to measure the state of the change unit so as to generate information indicating whether or not the validity period has elapsed, and an operation unit  
10 configured to be operable if the information indicates that the validity period fails to have yet elapsed, and to be inoperable if the information indicates that the validity period has elapsed;

15 preparing an IC card case capable to house the IC card by a user, the IC card case including an identification unit configured to determine whether or not the user is legitimate;

20 performing user identification utilizing the identification unit, when the IC card is housed in the IC card case; and

transmitting a signal to the change unit in the IC card depending on a result of the user identification, the signal initializing the change unit to the initial state.

25 2. The method according to claim 1, wherein:

the IC card case further includes a lock unit configured to lock the IC card in the IC card case; and

the lock unit is released after the signal is transmitted to the change unit.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the IC card and the IC card case further include comparison units configured to compare an ID of the IC card with an ID of the IC card case, the comparison units comparing the IDs when the IC card is housed into the IC card case, the lock unit being operated if the IDs are identical to each other.

10 4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the operation unit includes a comparison unit configured to compare an ID of the IC card with an ID of an IC card reader.

15 5. The method according to claim 1, wherein the operation unit includes an acquisition unit configured to acquire the external power from an external device and supply the external power to an interior of the IC card.

20 6. The method according to claim 1, wherein the IC card case further includes a determination unit configured to determine whether or not the IC card is a preset IC card, when the IC card case houses the IC card, the IC card case also including a lock unit configured to lock the IC card in the IC card case if the determination unit determines that the IC card is the preset IC card, the lock unit being released after the signal is transmitted to the change unit.

7. The method according to claim 1, wherein the change unit including an aging device utilized to measure time, a state of the aging device determining lapse of time.

5       8. An IC card unusing a built-in power supply and driven by an external power supplied from an external device when the IC card is connected to the external device, the IC card comprising:

10       a change unit whose state changes with lapse of time starting from an initial state without the external power;

15       a measuring unit configured to measure the state of the change unit so as to generate information indicating whether or not a period has elapsed; and

20       an operation unit configured to be operable if the information indicates that the period fails to have yet elapsed, and to be inoperable if the information indicates that the period has elapsed.

25       9. The IC card according to claim 8, wherein the operation unit includes a comparison unit configured to compare an ID of the IC card with an ID of the external device.

30       10. The IC card according to claim 8, wherein the operation unit includes a power receiving unit configured to receive the external power from the external device and supply the external power to an interior of the IC card.

11. The IC card according to claim 8, wherein the change unit including an aging device utilized to measure time, a state of the aging device determining lapse of time.

5       12. An IC card case capable to house an IC card by a user, the IC card starting measurement of a period in response to an instruction and continuing the measurement without an external power, the IC card being usable if the period fails to have elapsed and  
10      being unusable if the period has elapsed, the IC card case comprising:

an identification unit configured to determine whether or not the user is legitimate;

15      a performing unit configured to perform user identification utilizing the identification unit, when the IC card is housed in the IC card case; and

20      a transmission unit configured to transmit a signal to the IC card depending on a result of the user identification, the signal initializing the IC card to the initial state.

13. The IC card case according to claim 12, further comprising: an ejection unit configured to eject the IC card from the IC card case; and a lock unit configured to lock the IC card in the IC card case, the lock unit being released after the signal is transmitted to the IC card.  
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14. The IC card case according to claim 12,

further comprising: an ejection unit configured to eject the IC card from the IC card case; a determination unit configured to determine whether or not the IC card is a preset IC card when the IC card is housed  
5 into the IC card case; and a lock unit configured to lock the IC card in the IC card case if the determination unit determines that the IC card is the preset IC card, the lock unit being released after signal is transmitted to the IC card.

10        15. A charger to be connected to an IC card case to charge a battery unit provided in the IC card case capable to house an IC card by a user, the battery unit being configured to issue an instruction to the IC card, the IC card starting measurement of a period in  
15 response to the instruction, and continuing the measurement without an external power, the IC card being usable if the period fails to have elapsed and being unusable if the period has elapsed, the charger comprising:  
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a determination unit configured to determine whether or not the IC card case is a preset IC card case, when the IC card case is connected to the charger; and

25        a charging unit configured to charge the battery unit if the determination unit determines that the IC card case is the preset IC card case.